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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/159,104	09/23/1998	FUMIO DENDA	981091	4736
38834	7590	08/08/2005	EXAMINER	
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP			PENDLETON, BRIAN T	
1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NW			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SUITE 700				
WASHINGTON, DC 20036			2644	

DATE MAILED: 08/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/159,104	DENDA, FUMIO
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Brian T. Pendleton	2644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 April 2005.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,4,16 and 17 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1,4,16 and 17 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 23 September 1998 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Beller, US Patent 3,920,903. Beller discloses a speech training device comprising an original sound (from microphone 1 or tape player 2), a filter 4 for processing the original sound to attenuate a predetermined frequency range (under 6000 Hz) and a headset 13 for listening to the region attenuated sound. As disclosed in column 3 lines 16-45, the user listens to the region attenuated sound for 6-12 one-hour sessions, therefore, the user alternates listening between the region attenuation processed sound and silence (when not in a session). Claim 1 is met.

Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Rothenberg, US Patent 6,358,055. Rothenberg discloses a system comprising sensor 1 for receiving an original signal, prosodic variable extractor 3 having an articulary variation remover 40, transducer 11 and switch 15 in figure 4. The unit 40 is a bandpass filter (see column 5 lines 58-65) which attenuates a region over 2000 Hz. The switch 15 is used to alternate between the original waveform 14 and the processed waveform 33 (see column 6 lines 4-7). Claim 1 is met.

As to claim 4, alternatively, the articulatory variation remover can be variable (see column 5 lines 31-47) in order to removes sounds outside of the voice intonation frequencies.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rothenberg in view of Merzenich et al. Rothenberg does not specify that the interval between the processed and unprocessed (original) sound changes randomly. Merzenich et al discloses a listening training system whereby the interval between sounds heard by the user changes (decreases). Therefore it was already taught in the art of auditory training that varying the time between sounds to be interpreted by the user can increase their ability to comprehend the sounds over time. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to change the interval length between the original and parametric (processed) sound in the Rothenberg apparatus.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rothenberg. Rothenberg does not disclose that the region attenuation processed sound has a duration between 0.1 seconds and 7 seconds. However, in the abstract it is disclosed that the invention is directed toward a user's speech segments. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention that the duration of the voice signals that are processed are between the claimed range since speech segments are normally voiced in under a second.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Wakamoto, US Patent 6,500,006; Tomatis, US Patent 4,327,252; Mandel, US Patent 3,828,446; Silverstein et al, US Patent 4,802,228.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian T. Pendleton whose telephone number is (571) 272-7527. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vivian Chin can be reached on (571) 272-7848. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Brian T. Pendleton
Examiner
Art Unit 2644



btp